

idea that we have formed of heaven; we have not entertained such views, but we imagine when we get there that God will be the possessor—he is the possessor—of all things that are comprehended within that sphere of existence, that the thrones, the principalities, powers and crowns, and even the very garments that the exalted wear belong to God, and that he will give them to us, that we shall possess them, subject, of course, to his law and to those regulations which he will enact, or which he has already enacted. I do not suppose there was a Christian that ever lived, I do not suppose there was a heathen that ever lived who expected that, when he got to the next world, to the place of bliss which he anticipated in his faith while here, he would live in anything like the condition he occupied here. Converse with the Christians about the next world, and they will all say that they do not expect to have anything; that they are redeemed by the precious blood of the Lamb, and that all the glory and honor of their salvation they ascribed unto God and the Lamb; that they will be content with anything he chooses to give them when they reach there, they would be content to be doorkeepers or to occupy the lowest position if they could only be permitted to dwell in the presence of God. And the heathen who believe in a future state of existence, and this belief is universal among them (I believe it was Bancroft who said that atheism is the sin or crime of civilization, and not of heathendom or of natural men), the heathen universally believe in a future state of existence, and they picture to themselves a condition such as I have described, of course varying according to their faith and their views of this life, thinking that they will have circumstances similar in that life which is

to come, with this difference only, that they will be more perfect and will be delivered from the evils to which they are subjected here as mortal beings.

If then, my brethren and sisters, we are striving to live in accordance with that life to which we are hastening, we, by a little reflection, can see how much there is for us to do in order to prepare ourselves for the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ. One of the first teachings or revelations that was given to this church after its organization, was to the effect that we should dwell together as one family: that there should be an identity of interests among us; that we should approximate to some extent at least, and as far as practicable to that identity of interest which we understood, by the revelations of Jesus Christ, to exist in the eternal worlds. This revelation is one of the earliest given to this people, and its practice was entered upon in early days. We have been told by those who are old enough to know, and who had experience at that time, that to the disobedience or failure of the people in carrying out this revelation was due the expulsion of the Latter-day Saints from Jackson County in the State of Missouri; and that, afterward, the same causes operated to produce the results which the people experienced at that time, God suffering the enemies of his kingdom and people to have power over them because of their disobedience to respond to the call which he made upon, and to the commandments which he gave unto, them.

This is one of the traditions that has come down to us of a younger generation, from the fathers of this Church. It has been taught to us and impressed upon us for years, probably upon many of us since we knew anything of this work, until